

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.135

National Policy

Effective Date:
9/28/10

Cancellation Date:
9/28/11

SUBJ: Mandated Conversion of Paper Pilot Certificates to Plastic

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice serves to notify all Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) personnel of the deadline for conversion of paper pilot certificates to plastic, and to outline procedures for interacting with airmen in noncompliance after the conversion date.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is FSDO and International Field Office (IFO) aviation safety inspectors (ASI) (Maintenance and Avionics) who have certificate management oversight responsibilities. The secondary audience includes Flight Standards branches and divisions in the regions and in headquarters.

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee Web site at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators may find this information on the FAA's Web site at <http://fsims.faa.gov>.

4. Background. March 31, 2010, was the deadline for the expiration of paper pilot certificates. This deadline was widely communicated. The reason for the conversion from paper certificates to plastic was to provide security enhanced features in support of requirements defined in the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Act of 1988 and the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.

Note: Student pilot certificates and temporary airman certificates are not affected. Certain non-pilot certificates, which were issued under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 63 and part 65, are still valid until March 31, 2013 before they must be replaced.

a. Plastic Certificates. The FAA has been issuing plastic certificates since 2003. There have been nearly 130,000 replacement certificates processed since October 2009. The FAA estimates that as many as 90 percent of airmen, who are currently exercising the privileges of their certificates, already possess a plastic certificate.

b. Obtaining Replacement Certificates. Replacement certificates may be requested from the FAA Airman Certification Web site at:


www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/certificate_replacement/. For Web requests, certificates are processed and mailed to the airman within 7 days of the Web request. In-house replacements (those done by the Registry) are mailed approximately seven days from processing. If airmen call/contact the FAA after March 31, AFS-760 can send them a temporary authorization or they can order one from the Web for their use to give them time to send in for or request an online replacement certificate. The temporary authority is valid for 60 days. Temporary airman certificates may be used to exercise privileges and are not affected by the paper to plastic rule.

5. Current Status. As of March 31, 2010, paper pilot certificates are no longer valid for the purpose of exercising the airman privileges of that certificate. It should be noted that any pilots who have not replaced their paper certificate with a plastic certificate by that date, still retain their pilot privileges; however, they are not permitted to exercise those privileges until they procure either a plastic certificate or a paper temporary authorization in the form of an FAA Form 8060-4, Temporary Airman Certificate, FAA Airman Certification Branch Web-issued authorization, or other authorization as approved by the Administrator.

a. Exercising Pilot Privileges. If, in the course of his or her duties, an inspector encounters a pilot exercising pilot privileges when the pilot has only a paper certificate which is no longer valid, the inspector will advise the pilot that it is illegal to operate an aircraft when such operation requires a pilot certificate. The inspector should advise the airman that it is contrary to 14 CFR part 61, § 61.19(f) and that to knowingly conduct such an operation is contrary to Title 49 of the United States Code (49 U.S.C.).

b. Administrative Action. If the inspector determines that the violation was inadvertent and a first time offense, applying the guidance in the current edition of FAA Order 2150.3, FAA Compliance and Enforcement Program, the inspector will generally take administrative action. This is not to be construed as an extension of the deadline. After an inspector advises a pilot that he or she may not operate with the paper certificate, any further operation before the appropriate certificate is obtained will be a deliberate violation and the pilot will be subject to legal enforcement action.

6. Disposition. We will not incorporate the information in this notice in FSIMS before this notice expires. Questions concerning this notice should be directed to the Flight Standards Division, AFS-810, General Aviation and Commercial Division, at (202) 493-5474.

for 

John M. Allen
Director, Flight Standards Service